(b) whether it is a fact that for conducting researches on the causative organism of leprosy, Armadillo, a south American mammal; would be required; and

(c) if so, what steps Government have taken to regularise its import on a permanent basis?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (MISS KUMUDBHEN M. JOSHI): (a) The estimated number of leprosy patients in the country is 4 million which is about 1/4th of the total number of patients in the world. It is not a fact that the State of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu are lagging behind in the implementation of the National Leprosy Eradication Programme.

(b) and (c) Armadillo is required for research in leprosy on a selective basis to multiply laprae germs. It is not indispensable for research as lepra germs can also be taken from germ bank.

Armadillo were imported by CJIL, Agra and SLRTC, Karigiri, North Arcot.

Goitre control through iodized salt

1612. SHRI ARABINDA GHOSH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that about 40 million Indians are affected with endemic Goitre;

(b) if so, what measures Government have taken so far to check it;

(c) whether Government are aware of the fact that insufficient production of iodized salt, iodized sodium chloride and iodized oil injection and other fortifications, is making it difficult for the National Goitre Control Programme to succeed; and

(d) if so, what is the number of iodization plants that Government propose to instal during the remaining period of the Sixth Five Year Plan?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (MISS KUMUD BEN M. JOSHI): (a) to (d) It is estimated that nearly 40 million people are suffering from Goitre. To tackle the disease, the National Goitre Control Programme is in operation in the endemic areas with focus on the supply of iodised salt for human consumption.

Though iodized sodium chloride, iodized injection etc. are available, the strategy of iodisation of salt has been found to be cheapest and acceptable under the National Goitre Control Programme. 12 iodisation plants are already functioning in the country. In dization Plants are also expected to be installed in Himachal Pradesh during current year.

In order to augment the production of iodized salt, State Governments/ U.T. Administrations have been advised to encourage commercial production of iodized salt both in the Public and Private Sectors.

C.G.H.S. pharmacists

1613. SHRI RAM PUJAN PATEL: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to refer to reply to Unstarred Question 2476 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 14th December, 1983, and state:

(a) the details of recommendations made by the Committee constituted to look into the grievances of C.G.H.S. pharmacists, the date of submission of its report to Government and the recommendations implemented since then; and

(b) if the recommendations have not been implemented, what are the reasons therefor?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (MISS KUMUD BEN M. JOSHI): (a) and (b) The Committee which was constituted to look into the grievances of C.G.H.S. pharmacists submitted its report on 2-5-1979

and recommended creation of the following promotional posts:—

1. Senior Pharmacist-cum-Storekeeper.
2. Assistant Store Superintendent.
3. Zonal Store Superintendent.
4. Depot Manager.

The recommendations could not be implemented due to financial constraints.

Reported adulteration in food commodities

1614. SHRI SHANTI TYAGI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news item which appeared in the Indian Express of 19th July, 1984 under the caption "Alarming food adulteration in Delhi;"

(b) whether Government have made an enquiry into the matter; and

(c) what action has been initiated by the Prevention of Food Adulteration Department in such cases during the last six months?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (MISS KUMUDBEN M. JOSHI): (a) Yes.

(b) Yes.

(c) The Department of Prevention of Food Adulteration, Delhi has intensified the implementation of the P.F.A. Act in the Union Territory. During the period from January to 3rd August, 1984, 1024 samples were lifted. Out of these 103 samples were found adulterated. 54 prosecution cases have been launched in the year 1984 upto June, 1984.

Rail connection between Narkatia Ganj Gorakhpur

1615. SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA:
SHRI INDRADEEP SINHA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Bagaha Chittauni Rail bridge was damaged in 1924;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the railway connection between Narkatia Ganj and Gorakhpur junction remains severed till date; and

(c) whether Government have any plans to connect these two junction; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI A.B.A. GHANI KHAN CHOUDHURY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Restoration of Chittauni Bagaha MG rail link (28.41 kms.) is an approved project. The 9 kms. section between Bagaha and Valmikinagar Road has already been opened to traffic, as a part of this project.

Railway freight equalisation policy

1616. SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA:
SHRI INDRADEEP SINHA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the commodities on which the Railway freight equalisation policy is applicable;

(b) the reasons for which the consumer goods of bulk supply have been exempted;

(c) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the relevant section of the report of the interministerial group on freight equalisation that compared to the freight rate on distance